

REMARKS

In an Office Action mailed on April 17, 2009, claims 2 and 3 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph; and claims 1-3, 11, 12, 16, 18, 22, 97 and 99-103 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Springer in view of Roberts.

Regarding the § 112, second paragraph rejections, independent claim 1 has been amended to remove the language, which previously limited claim 1 to an apparatus that connects first and second tubing sections. For at least this reason, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 2 and 3, which further define the apparatus as including production/injection tubing sections formed at least in part by the first and second tubing section overcome the § 112, second paragraph rejections.

As amended, the apparatus of claim 1 recites a body and a sleeve other than the body. The sleeve is adapted to be moved from a retracted position to an extended position. Thus, claim 1 has been amended to clarify that the sleeve and the body are separate elements.

To make a determination under 35 U.S.C. § 103, several basic factual inquiries must be performed, including determining the scope and content of the prior art, and ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue. *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 17, 148 U.S.P.Q. 459 (1965). Moreover, as the U.S. Supreme Court held, it is important to identify a reason that would have prompted a person of ordinary skill in the art to combine reference teachings in the manner that the claimed invention does. *KSR International Co. v. Teleflex, Inc.*, 127 S. Ct. 1727, 1741, 82 U.S.P.Q.2d 1385 (2007).

Applicant respectfully submits that the hypothetical combination of Springer and Roberts fails to disclose the claimed body and sleeve of claim 1. In this regard, the Office Action labels Springer's threaded connection 24 as allegedly being the sleeve of claim 1. However, the Office Action fails to label which component is considered to be the body of claim 1. For at least the reason that Springer fails to disclose a body and a sleeve, as specifically set forth in claim 1, Springer fails to disclose at least these limitations. Roberts, which is not relied by the Office Action for the disclosures of the body and sleeves, fails to disclose the missing claim limitations. Therefore, for at least the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the § 103 rejection of claim 1.

The connector assembly of independent claim 97 recites a sleeve and first and second bodies. For at least the reason that the hypothetical combination of Springer and Roberts fails to

disclose a connector assembly that includes first and second bodies and a sleeve, as explicitly recited in claim 97, claim 97 overcomes the § 103 rejection.

For reasons similar to those set forth above for independent claim 1, the hypothetical combination of Springer and Roberts fails to disclose or render obvious all of the limitations of claim 101. In this regard, the method of claim 101 recites providing a body and providing a sleeve other than the body. For at least the reason that Springer fails to disclose these two acts, and is relied upon by the Examiner for such a teaching, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 101 overcomes the § 103 rejection. It is noted that Roberts fails to disclose or otherwise render obvious the missing claim limitations.

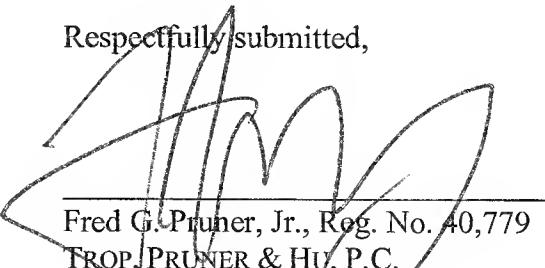
Dependent claims 2, 3, 11, 12, 16, 18, 22, 99, 100, 102 and 103 overcome the § 103 rejections for at least the same reasons as the claims from which they depend.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the §§ 103 and 112 rejections and a favorable action in the form of a Notice of Allowance. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 20-1504 (SHL.0238US).

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Respectfully submitted,


Fred G. Pruner, Jr., Reg. No. 40,779
TROP, PRUNER & HU, P.C.
1616 S. VOSS ROAD, SUITE 750
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77057
713/468-8880 [Phone]
713/468-8883 [Fax]